

feature'. I have determined that this is actually the obturator foramen, a character which is present in the holotype of *Rioarribasaurus colberti* (AMNH 7224; personal observation), *Lilienstermus lilienstermi*, *Syntarsus rhodesiensis* (Raath, 1969, p. 15, fig. 4b), and also in *S. kayentakatae* to which a number of Ghost Ranch specimens can be tentatively referred (personal observation).

4. There is now strong evidence (Sullivan, 1994) that suggests that the type material of *C. bauri* did not come from the Ghost Ranch (Whitaker) quarry. Moreover, my preliminary study of the Ghost Ranch specimens strongly suggests that two closely related yet distinct taxa (*Rioarribasaurus* and *Syntarsus*) are represented there. Colbert's (1989) concept of *Coelophysis bauri* is most likely a composite of these; this would explain the unexpected morphological variation cited by him (1989, p. 132; 1990, p. 89) amongst the Ghost Ranch theropods. The original Cope material could belong to either.

5. Paul (1993, p. 400) recognized *C. bauri* as a nomen dubium. The characters he (or for that matter Colbert, 1989) used to recognize *Rioarribasaurus* (or *Coelophysis*) and *Syntarsus* are ambiguous, and Paul's synonymy of these taxa is unjustified. However, I believe *some* of the Ghost Ranch specimens can be referred to *Syntarsus*; I base this on my studies of the type material of *C. bauri*, the holotype of *R. colberti*, and other specimens in blocks at the American Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History and The State Museum of Pennsylvania.

6. In conclusion, (i) the type material of *Coelophysis bauri* (and of *C. longicollis* and *C. willistoni*) is undiagnostic; (ii) the 'neotype designation' by Hunt & Lucas (1993) is doubly invalid; (iii) there are two distinct theropod taxa (*Rioarribasaurus* and *Syntarsus*) among the Ghost Ranch specimens, and the type material of *C. bauri* may belong to either.

#### Additional references

- Colbert, E.H. 1990. Variation in *Coelophysis bauri*. Pp. 81–90 in Carpenter, K. & Currie, P.J. (Eds.), *Dinosaur systematics: perspectives and approaches*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Hunt, A.P. & Lucas, S.G. 1993. Triassic vertebrate paleontology and biochronology of New Mexico. Pp. 49–60 in Lucas, S.G. & Zidek, J. (Eds.), *Vertebrate paleontology in New Mexico*. Bulletin 2, New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, Albuquerque.
- Sullivan, R.M. 1994. Topotypic material of *Coelophysis bauri* (Cope) and the *Coelophysis-Rioarribasaurus-Syntarsus* problem. P. 48A in Abstracts of Papers. *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, 14(3)(Supplement).

#### Comments on the proposed conservation of the specific name of *Liophis poecilogyrus* (Wied-Neuwied, [1824]) (Reptilia, Serpentes)

(Case 2875; see BZN 51: 250–252)

(1) Laurie J. Witt

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I am in complete agreement with the application by Drs Smith, Dixon and Wallach. If one of the disused senior synonyms were introduced an incredible

confusion would result in future literature, since *L. poecilgyrus* has been used in many taxonomic and ecological publications (including some of mine). It would require all ecologists referring to the species to trace the history of name use, and that is unlikely to happen. I trust the Commission will approve the application.

(2) Support for the application has also been received from Edwin L. Bell (*Albright College, P.O. Box 15234, Reading, Pennsylvania 19612-5234, U.S.A.*) and from Kenneth L. Williams (*Department of Life Science, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches, Louisiana 71497, U.S.A.*).

**Comments on the proposed conservation of some mammal generic names first published in Brisson's (1762) *Regnum Animale***  
(Case 2928; see BZN 51: 135-146, 266-267, 342-348)

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I completely agree with the proposal to conserve 11 of Brisson's mammal generic names and hope that it will be accepted by the Commission.

My special concern is *Hydrochoerus* Brisson, 1762. The living capybara has received several different generic names, most of them being orthographical variations such as *Hydrochoerus* Brisson, 1762, *Hydrochaeris* Brännich, 1771, *Hydrochaerus* Erxleben, 1777, *Hydrochoeris* Allen, 1916 and *Hydrocheirus* Hollande & Batisse, 1959, as well as other names such as *Capibara* Moussy, 1860 and *Capiguara* Liais, 1872. Many of these names have been used only once or very seldom in the extensive bibliography on the family HYDROCHOERIDAE.

Before the publication of Cabrera's (1961) *Catálogo de los mamíferos de América del Sur*, and despite the differences in spelling, all references to *Hydrochoerus* were cited with Brisson's authorship. Following Cabrera's influential work (and not Hopwood's 1947 rediscovery of Brännich's *Zoologiae Fundamenta*) some authors adopted Brännich's name, but many others continued to use Brisson's. I have repeatedly defended the latter course (Mones, 1973, 1984, 1991; Mones & Ojasti, 1986), my main argument being the extensive use of *Hydrochoerus* Brisson, 1762 by almost all authors before Cabrera's work, and by a significant number of workers after it. Moreover, the suffix *-choerus*, and not *-chaeris*, is consistently used for many other names of related genera (for example, *Protohydrochoerus* Rovereto, 1914, *Neochoerus* Hay, 1926, *Hydrochoeropsis* Kraglievich, 1930, *Xenohydrochoerus* Rusconi, 1934, *Nothydrochoerus* Rusconi, 1935, *Prohydrochoerus* Spillmann, 1941, *Anatochoerus* Vecetich & Mones, 1991).

As a student who has been working with Recent and fossil capybaras for the last 30 years, I deeply agree with, and emphatically support, Gentry's application, not only for the name of the capybara but also for the remaining generic names. I am convinced that approval by the Commission will bring stability to the nomenclature.

**Additional references**

Mones, A. 1973. Estudios sobre la familia Hydrochoeridae (Rodentia). 1. Introducción e historia taxonómica. *Revista Brasileira de Biología*, 33(2): 277-283.